

**September  
2006**

# EDUCATION MATTERS

Volume 3, Issue I

## MISSION

The District of Columbia State Education Office promotes learning for District residents of all ages by providing access to resources, services and information for a higher quality of life.

## VISION

The District of Columbia State Education Office is the agency that is leading the District of Columbia's transformation into a City of Learning.

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## MAYOR ANTHONY A. WILLIAMS AND THE DC STATE EDUCATION OFFICE HOSTS HISTORIC COLLEGE FAIR

*Thousands of D.C. students, parents, colleges, private scholarship providers and education stakeholders joined Mayor Anthony A. Williams in a landmark college fair.*

(Washington, DC) Mayor Anthony A. Williams, the DC State Education Office (SEO) and the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) hosted a historic event: the 1st Annual Mayor's College Fair for rising high school seniors in the District of Columbia. The fair was the first time all of the DC education systems, colleges from across the country and private scholarship providers came together to promote the goal of going to college. The event kicked off the first college fair of the season and thousands of DC students, parents and education stakeholders attended the fair.

The college fair was held to further enhance the education services provided to parents, students and university partners. DC education stakeholders and students spoke and representatives from over 60 colleges, the U.S. Department of Education, and private scholarship providers answered questions about going to college.

"It is exciting to know that all of the education agencies in the District of Columbia, whether public or public charter, private or parochial joined forces for the first time in an effort to provide our youth with the opportunity to access the necessary information they need to get a higher education," stated Mayor Anthony Williams.

Deborah A. Gist, the SEO State Education Officer said, "The State Education Office is uniquely qualified to bring all of the education agencies together, we look forward to future joint endeavors that provide DC residents with educational opportunities."

Mayor Anthony Williams was joined by Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton; John Parham II, SEO's Director of Higher Education Financial Services; UDC President Dr. William Pollard and other top leaders from the District's school systems including: Dr. Clifford Janey, Superintendent of DC Public Schools; Dr. Patricia Weitzel-O'Neill, Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Archdiocese of Washington; Josephine Baker, Executive Director of the DC Public Charter School Board; Marjo Talbott, a Board Member with the Association of Independent Schools of Greater Washington; and Sheila Stewart of WKYS-FM who served as Mistress of Ceremony.



John Parham II, Shelia Stewart, Dr. Patricia Weitzel-O'Neill, Josephine Baker, Mayor Anthony Williams, Marjo Talbott, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton



Over 2,000 DC students attended The 1st Annual Mayor's College Fair



## STATE EDUCATION OFFICE

### STATE EDUCATION OFFICER

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### GENERAL COUNSEL

**Monica Brown**

### LEADERSHIP TEAM

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*Nutrition Services*

**Dr. Eurmon Hervey**  
*Education Programs*

**Ms. Rehva D. Jones**  
*Innovation,  
Planning & Performance*

**Mr. John Parham II**  
*Higher Education Financial Services*

**Dr. Glenda Partee**  
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**Dr. Jo Ann Smoak**  
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**Mr. John A. Stokes**  
*Marketing & Communications*

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## A Message from the State Education Officer



I am pleased to welcome you to the third volume of Education Matters. As students begin to settle in at schools across the city, I wanted to take a moment to share some of the

great things the State Education Office is doing for the "Back-to-School" season.

*The 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Mayor's College Fair*, held on September 15, 2006, was a great success! The event featured a Ribbon Cutting ceremony conducted by Mayor Anthony Williams and featured guest speakers including the U.S. Congressional Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton; Superintendent of District of Columbia Public Schools, Dr. Clifford Janey; Tonya Brown, a DC Tuition Assistance Grant (DC TAG) college senior. Representatives from ACT, Gates Millennium Foundation, DC CAP, College Bound, The Thurgood Marshall Foundation, and others attended.

The Education Licensure Commission (ELC) will institute a new process for higher education institutions seeking education licensure this month. Applications will be available on the SEO website and applicants will be required to attend a New Applicant Workshop before the application is accepted for review. The workshops, starting September 18, 2006, will be offered every other month.

Since the 2001 - 2002 school year, the State Education Office (SEO) has held the legislatively mandated responsibility for verifying fall enrollment counts for public and public charter schools. During this year's audit, scheduled to begin on October 5, 2006, the SEO will count and examine the records of approximately 80,000 students at each of the public schools. This will be the sixth year for a full census-type audit in which teams of auditors will visit every public school locations and count every public school student. Policy, Research & Analysis (PRA), in coordination with the independent auditing firm of Thompson, Cobb, Bazilio &

Associates (TCBA), has scheduled three days of staff training for the audit. PRA and TCBA have designed new policies and procedures to allow schools greater opportunities to present information to the auditors.

Also on October 5th, Nutrition Services will be joining Action for Healthy Kids *Game On! The Ultimate Wellness Challenge*. Action for Healthy Kids, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and working with the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Education, and other leading organizations, will inform, motivate, and mobilize support for school wellness – sound nutrition and physical activity – to support learning through *Game On! The Ultimate Wellness Challenge*. This fun, all-inclusive activity course integrates nutrition education, physical activity, and learning to challenge students' minds and bodies, as well as to reinforce the importance of healthy eating and physical activity. I encourage anyone with students in the 5th – 8th grades (including parents, teachers, and administrators) to celebrate the back-to-school season with a fresh approach!

This year The DC Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness (DC GEAR UP) program will pilot the first-ever College Awareness Course at Dunbar Senior High School. DC GEAR UP students participating in the pilot course will earn one Carnegie Unit. The College Awareness Course is designed to inform students and their families about postsecondary education options. Each course unit will focus on the steps students need to take in order to pursue a two-year or four-year degree. Students will be introduced to basic postsecondary concepts such as issues that impact college-bound students and how to complete necessary documents to attend and finance postsecondary education. Additionally, through workshops and other activities geared to increase parental involvement, this course will aim to raise parental awareness and understanding of the importance and benefits of obtaining a postsecondary education.

Respectfully,

# SEO's Employee Spotlight

The State Education Office would like to highlight three outstanding employees who received the Golden Apple Award for this past quarter. The Golden Apple Certificate is awarded to employees who demonstrate loyalty, diligence and superior performance in their respective departments within the State Education Office.

## Golden Apple recipient for May is Stephanie Cheng:

Stephanie Cheng, an Education Policy Analyst, has been a welcome addition to the Policy, Research, and Analysis (PR&A) staff. She is a relentless employee who is willing to take on any task assigned and is eager to learn and help her colleagues where needed. She is thorough and accurate in every task involving research, compiling materials, designing a website and creating tables and graphs.

### Q&A

*Steph, how does the work you do impact the community?*

PR&A provides policymakers with information about what is going on around the city and country on education efforts and policy reform. This information, which includes Policy Breakfast Forums and research reports, assists policymakers in making informed decisions concerning education.

Our goal is to provide information so that policymakers can make the best decisions to improve education in the district.

## Golden Apple recipient for June is Diedre Bell:

Diedre is a program specialist for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), a division of Nutrition Services. She exemplifies what any manager would look for in an ideal employee. She is dedicated, hard working, and always willing to pitch in as a dependable member of the Nutrition Services team.



Diedre Bell, Abay Awash, Stephanie Cheng

### Q&A

*Diedre, how important is TEFAP to the community?*

Alarming statistics show that a large number of citizens in the District of Columbia are at risk of experiencing hunger. TEFAP helps to supplement households that are income eligible to receive nutritious and balance food sources through the program.

## Golden Apple recipient for July is Abay Awash:

Abay is a Program Analyst for Higher Education Financial Services department (HEFS). He has been praised with going the extra mile for (HEFS).

### Q&A

*Abay, as a customer service representative for the HEFS program, what has been your most memorable experience in assisting a student applying for the DCTAG/LEAP program?*

I met a young lady whose mother was incarcerated and father was not present. Without access to the proper documentation to receive financial assistance, her college was about to drop her enrollment. I did some research, contacted her relative to assist in getting the paperwork to complete her DCTAG/DCLEAP application and was able to provide her with an Award Letter that allowed her to register for her college classes; she cried from happiness! Sometimes we're fortunate enough to realize how much we can impact other people's lives. It really lets me know they will succeed.

## Education Experience



The DC Free Summer Meals program provides free, nutritional, good food to youth up to 18 years of age and certain adults with disabilities.

The DC Free Summer Meals program was ranked number one in the nation for 2005.

The District of Columbia was recognized for feeding 27,575 low income children daily during the month of July 2005. This was the highest summer food participation rate in the United States, according to a new report from the Food Research and Action Center.

Ms. Carline Coote, mother of Cheyenne Coote states, "Cheyenne is obsessive about learning and she is very particular about eating healthy food. I am very proud of Cheyenne and am

grateful that Cheyenne has access to healthy, nutritious food that comes at no cost to me."

### Inspirational Facts

- ✓ During the summer of 2003, 2004 and 2005, DC has ranked #1 in the nation for feeding youth during the summer.
- ✓ During the summer of 2006, the DC Free Summer Meals program operated in 376 locations across DC. This is up from 301 locations during the summer of 2005.



## Did You Know ?

### Education Licensure Commission (ELC)

is a regulatory authority is executed by five resident Commissioners appointed by the Mayor of the District of Columbia. SEO staff members support and implement the policies of the Commission.

The primary functions of the Commission are to license and regulate post-secondary education institutions, enforce post-secondary education laws and regulations, investigate complaints against institutions, and maintain closed institutions' student records.

The Commission meets once a month in a public meeting at 441 4th Street to review and vote on license applications.

### DC Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness (DC GEAR UP)

received the 2006 Promoting Excellence and Innovation in Education grant from the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP). This \$50,000 competitive grant was made possible by NCCEP and the AT&T Foundation. The purpose of the grant program is to support education partnerships and achievement in K-16 education that "prepare students for college attendance and the workplace by supporting after-school and summer academic enrichment programs in math, science, reading, and technological literacy."

DC GEAR UP will celebrate the grant with NCCEP, AT&T, and other partners on September 30<sup>th</sup> at Georgetown University. The celebration will highlight the work of students who spent four weeks of their summer learning about genetic research, language study, and general research which culminated in a week-long hands on study abroad trip to Costa Rica.

### SEO Ed Digest

is a free online tool distributed monthly by the State Education Office. Our mission is to share national research on urban P-16 education with city leaders, administrators, researchers, the education policy community and other interested stakeholders. Visit the SEO Ed Digest at [www.seo.dc.gov](http://www.seo.dc.gov). You can subscribe to the SEO Ed Digest by registering at <http://dc.gov/registration/dcdocs.asp>

### Higher Education Financial Services (HEFS)

hosted the *1st Annual Mayor's College Fair*. The fair offered DC students an opportunity to learn about colleges' and universities' curricula, specialties, finance options, demographics, available scholarships, fellowship organizations dedicated to funding secondary education, and the role the U.S. Department of Education plays in their post secondary educational pursuits. Over 2,000 juniors and seniors from the District's public, charter, parochial, and private schools were in attendance, many through the collaboration of transportation efforts organized by the State Education Office. As well, over 70 public and private college and universities (including many Historically Black Colleges and Universities), along with a number of scholarship and college support organizations were also in attendance making the presence of colleges, universities, and organizations from across the United States a strong one.

Under Mayor William's administration, the D.C. Tuition Assistance Grant program (DCTAG), administered by the SEO, has provided nearly 23,000 awards of financial assistance to approximately 10,000 D.C. students attending college, totaling over \$100 million dollars since FY 2000! The D.C. Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership program (DCLEAP) has provided nearly 10,500 awards of financial assistance to D.C. residents, totaling over \$13 million dollars since FY 2000.

### Nutrition Services

is in the process of developing an on-line web based system to automate the applications and claims process. Phase one of the web-based system is currently underway.

**The National School Lunch Program (NSLP)** conducted a workshop for schools interested in participating the NSLP on August 9<sup>TH</sup> from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm at the DC Charter Board.



Cheyenne Cotte  
Paul Public Charter School

**Nutrition Services** in collaboration with the **Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellowship**, a project of the Congressional Hunger Center, sponsored an art and poetry contest for the children enrolled at Summer Feeding locations throughout the District. Two winners were selected from the 5-12 and 13-18 age groups for a total of 4 winners.

The winners received a radio spot, a page in the newspaper and had their work featured in other promotional materials for future Free Summer Meals Program (FSMP) advertising.



Maria Lumbre  
Paul Public Charter School

## What's New



Joya Young, age 12

### WINNERS OF THE 1st ANNUAL DC FREE SUMMER MEALS ART AND POETRY CONTEST ANNOUNCED

The State Education Office (SEO), in partnership with the Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellowship announced the winners of the DC Free Summer Meals Art and Poetry Contest. The age groups were five to twelve and thirteen to eighteen. One winner was chosen from each age group for art and poetry. The theme for the contest was "The Importance of Healthy Eating." Cheyenne Coote, age ten, and Maria Lumbré, age thirteen, were the winners in the art contest. Joya Young, age twelve, and Victoria Glaude, age thirteen, were the poetry winners. Newspapers, radio stations, calendars and advertisements for healthy eating feature the winning art work and poetry.

The DC Free Summer Meals program is administered by the Nutrition Services Division of the SEO and provides access to healthy and good food, free of charge, to youth age nineteen and younger during the summer months. This year's program operated from June 19 through August 31, 2006. During the summer of 2005, over 1.2 million free meals were served, making DC number one in the country for feeding youth during the summer, according to a report release by the Food Research Action Center (FRAC).

The goal of the DC Free Summer Meals Art and Poetry contest was to give children and youth the opportunity to express their feelings regarding healthy eating. "Eating healthy and nutritious meals is very important for all children and youth," states Dr. Cynthia Bell, Director of the SEO's Nutrition Services department. "It is equally important to have children involved in activities that increase their awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. We appreciate the opportunity to have worked with the Congressional Hunger Center and the Emerson National Hunger Fellows on this project."

Information about SEO's programs is available on the SEO website at [www.seo.dc.gov](http://www.seo.dc.gov).

Information about the Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellowship is available at <http://www.hungercenter.org/national/national.htm>.

### New Team Members & Anniversaries

#### New Team Members

**6/10/2006**

Stephanie Thomas  
Coordinator/College Relations  
Higher Education Financial Services

**6/27/2006**

Sheranda C. Vaughan  
Staff Assistant  
Education Programs and  
Policy, Research & Analysis

#### Anniversaries

**7/31/1976**

Diedre E. Bell  
Food Program Specialist  
Nutrition Services

**8/4/1986**

Lillie G. Tinsley  
Senior Program Specialist  
Nutrition Services

**8/27/2001**

Deborah A. Gist  
State Education Officer  
State Education Office

**9/18/2001**

Melisa Rawles  
Senior Policy Analyst  
Policy, Research & Analysis

**7/15/2002**

John Parham  
Director  
Higher Education Financial Services

**8/1/2002**

Melanie R. Fleming  
Program Analyst  
Higher Education Financial Services

**8/25/2002**

Dileep Rajan  
Education Policy Analyst  
Policy, Research & Analysis

**7/13/2003**

Sarah Latterner  
Special Assistant  
Nutrition Services

**7/14/2003**

Cardell E. Saunders  
Program Specialist  
Nutrition Services

**9/8/2003**

Sheila A. Henderson  
Program Analyst  
DC GEAR UP, Education Programs

**7/26/2004**

Barry C. Brinkley  
Program Analyst  
DC GEAR UP, Education Programs

**7/11/2005**

Kadidia Thiero  
Outreach Coordinator  
Higher Education Financial Services

**7/11/2005**

Yuliana Del Arroyo  
Program Analyst  
DC GEAR UP, Education Programs

# What's Happening

## September 2006

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## October 2006

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29	30	31				

## November 2006

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## December 2006

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31						

## January 2007

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## February 2007

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25	26	27	28			

## Calendar of Events

Date/Time	Event
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### DC Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness

09/30/06 11:00 am - 12:00 pm	2006 Promoting Excellence & Innovation in Education Georgetown University
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### Education Licensure Commission

09/18/06, 10/18/06, 11/13/06, 12/18/06 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm	New Application Workshop State Education Office One Judiciary Square, Suite 350N
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### Higher Education Financial Services

09/15/06 10:00 am – 6:00 pm	First Annual Mayor's College Fair University of the District of Columbia Building 47/Athletic Gymnasium
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### Operation Services

09/08/06 10:00 am – 4:00 pm	Diverse CITY Job Fair Promoting Career Opportunities for Asian and Pacific Islanders National Building Museum, 401 "F" street, NW
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### Nutrition Services

10/06/06 9:00 am – 3:00 pm	National Action for Healthy Kids Game On! Ultimate Wellness Challenge National Mall, Washington DC
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### Policy, Research, & Analysis

09/15/06 10:00 am – 2:00 pm	Adult Literacy Steering Committee Meeting By invitation
09/20/06 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Literacy Stakeholders Meeting By invitation
10/13/06 – 11/30/06	Student Enrollment Count Audit District of Columbia Public Schools

## ***DC Free Summer Meals Poetry Winners***

*Sponsored in partnership by the DC State Education Office  
and  
The Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellowship*

### ***“The Importance of Eating Healthy”***

*By Victoria “Gabby” Glaude, age 13*

*It is important to eat healthy, so you can feel good  
You will be able to enjoy life, just as you should  
Don’t you want to run, laugh, jump, and feel free?  
Instead of being sick, tired all of the time, and feeling unhealthy  
Go outside and jog, climb, or exercise  
Instead of staring at the television and eating French-fries  
Try to eat fruits, vegetables, and drink juices every day  
You can even stay healthy by drinking as much water as you may  
If you want strong bones and protein, eat meat like steak  
Fatty foods and sweets, please give them a break  
Eating healthy is essential, and look what it brings ...  
Good vision, being disease-free, and other good things  
So, if you want to live a healthier life and don’t know how  
Go eat stuff such as apples and carrots right now!*

### ***Joya’s Poem***

*By Joya Young, age 12*

*Eat healthy, get strong,  
And even live long.  
If you don’t eat healthy I don’t mind,  
But if I were you, I would change my mind.  
Cause if you eat junk and don’t exercise,  
You will become obese, and will have to stay inside,  
But if you eat healthy you can go outside,  
And you won’t have to hide,  
And you would be able to roll on by.*